PEACE CORPS
volunteer
JUNE 1968

GUNG-HO PEOPLE

REALISTIC PEOPLE

PEACEFUL PEOPLE

MARRIED COUPLES

ALL-AMERICAN BOYS

PEOPLE SEEKING ADVENTURE

NEW GRADUATES

PEOPLE BORED WITH THEIR PRESENT EXISTENCE

What sort of person joins the Peace Corps?

A farewell look at the challenges facing the

'Movement of the haves'

By CHARLES PETERS

The roots of violence – hunger, hatred, injustice, fear and ignorance—are so tangled and deep that anyone in his right mind has to admit that the prospects for peace on this planet are dim indeed.

Laws and treaties, the formal agreements men make about the rules that should govern their behavior, have failed to eliminate violence. So has the fear—which armies and police forces seek to inspire—of violating those agreements. Money in the form of foreign aid and welfare programs has also failed.

Something else has been needed. I think the Peace Corps may have found that something else: the voluntary service of the haves to help the have-nots attain their potential, help that is given without self-righteousness or condescension, help that translates love into practical action and thus gives substance to the powerful religious impulse of mankind.

The failures of the foreign aid program in Asia, Africa and Latin America have provided the clearest evidence of the need for the Peace Corps' approach. The money and equipment that were given were largely wasted because little importance was attached to teaching the skills and knowledge and attitudes and values needed to use that money and equipment effectively. The Peace Corps has been doing that teaching for seven years. Its record is sufficiently impressive that I feel it can justly be called the most important movement in the world today.

This does not mean that the record is unblemished. As an organization, the Peace Corps has often failed in training its Volunteers in the verbal and cultural language of their hosts, in the skills they were to teach, and in the obstacles which would confront them. It has also frequently failed in the task we call programming, the placement of Volunteers in jobs in which they have a genuine opportunity for effective functioning. In all of these areas there has, however, been tremendous improvement since 1961.

Looking forward from 1968, I see five major areas to which I would urge the organization's attention:

Voluntary service

• The encouragement of other voluntary service programs has thus far been left largely to one small bureaucratic entity within Peace Corps Washington. I think this work should be a major thrust of Volunteers and staff throughout the world. The Volunteers must not only change have-nots into haves, but also inspire a sense of service in the new haves so that they will share their new knowledge and skills with others. The needs of the have-nots are simply not going to be met without massive growth of the voluntary service movement. There are only a few life-time saints in the world. But there are a lot of good people who are capable of giving *part* of their lives to helping others. In other words, few career teachers are going to choose to spend their lives in the Harlems of the world, but many of them, along with thousands of other bright people, would be willing to teach in such places for a limited time. These Volunteers are needed wherever the needs of the have-nots are not being met at all or are being met by third raters, even on the police forces of American cities.

A special elite

• The Peace Corps must face the fact that it is a movement of the haves. By haves, I don't, of course, mean the economic and social elites. I mean the elite of heart and mind and ability. Occasionally, we have lowered our selection standards because of vague democratic instincts or because, realizing that the Peace Corps happened to be a valuable educational experience, we thought it should be made more widely available. My experience observing Volunteers in the field has led me to conclude that we have been mistaken when we lowered standards, that we could have been more effective in the field and, ultimately, have experienced greater growth if we had taken roughly 25 per cent fewer applicants than we actually invited. As to effectiveness, I don't see how my statement could be doubted by those who have actually seen the bottom quarter.

As to ultimate growth, I don't think there's anything more destructive to our recruiting efforts than the realization by the outstanding college senior invitee that we are also inviting seniors who clearly have nothing to offer. That is the point. You have to be a have. You have to have something to offer.

Human qualifications

• But in deciding whether an individual is qualified to serve, the Peace Corps must continue and expand its fight against the kind of mentality that

says one must have a master's degree in education to teach or be an M.D. or R.N. to deal with health problems. The Peace Corps has already proved that the essentials of teacher training can be given in 12 weeks to people who know their subjects. It has also begun to show that tasks in agriculture and health can be defined with sufficient precision that men with the necessary will and aptitude to learn can be trained in a few months to function effectively in these fields. We have, however, only scratched the surface. Much more attention must be given to this kind of creative job analysis if the Peace Corps movement is to achieve its full potential by being able to give useful skills to every person who has the human qualifications and is willing to serve.

Changing attitudes

• The Peace Corps must clarify its thinking about the issues of cultural imperialism and paternalism. Attitude change is a critical part of the Peace Corps' mission. It doesn't help to show the farmer a new kind of seed unless you change the attitudes that keep him from using it. Yet many good people in the Peace Corps have been badly hung up by the notion that it is somehow wrong to try to change attitudes. And, unless that notion is dealt with, the Peace Corps won't be nearly as effective as it could be in bringing about social and economic development. Minds must be freed from the chains of rote learning and trained in problem-solving. Confidence and entrepreneurship must replace apathy and hopelessness. People must be freed from fear or hatred of those outside their family, class, tribe or religion and encouraged to understand and work in harmony with those who are different.

There is no reason that efforts to change attitudes should be accompanied by feelings of smug superiority or by imperialistic attempts to exploit. I hope everyone in the Peace Corps will read Tanzania President Julius Nyerere's brilliant essay on "Education for Self-Reliance," which shows that one of the most thoughtful leaders of the developing world is concerned about encouraging those same attitude changes among his people. We should not be ashamed of the attitudes that represent the best in the American tradition, but proud to realize that these values are shared not just by concerned Americans but by other men who care about building a better world. At the same time, we should be made humble by the vulgarity and hatred that abound in America, by the fact that hundreds of thousands of American college students have chosen to do nothing but sit on their deferments while others serve.

Spirit of service

• Preserving the idealistic character of the Peace Corps is essential. The movement must resist attempts to change it from a service movement to one in which material rewards are sufficiently substantial to motivate its applicants. It must eliminate the pockets of fat living that still exist. The spirit of service simply isn't being communicated by Volunteers who are waited upon by houseboys. But the idealistic character of the Peace Corps is dependent on far more than avoiding material reward and high living. It is nourished by the freedom of speech and the strong spirit of self-criticism which have flourished in the organization through most of its history. It is strengthened by a climate of high expectations in which the best is demanded of every Volunteer, a climate that can only be produced by staff members who make the same demands of themselves.

I think the greatest threat to the idealistic character of the Peace Corps is the tendency of the organization to be more interested in itself than in the people it's supposed to be helping. You see this tendency manifesting itself in overseas staff members whose thoughts center on the Volunteers and the Washington office and whose contact with the host people is the minimum necessary to satisfy their two other constituencies. In Peace Corps Washington this tendency becomes even more grotesque as some staff members devote most of their time to advancing or defending the interests of their own bureaucratic unit. The only acceptable test of the activity of every member of this organization is whether its final result will be more effective help for the people of our host countries.

Charles Peters was the Peace Corps' first evaluator and the first director of the Office of Evaluation, a position he has held for the past six years. A lawyer and a former delegate in the West Virginia Legislature, Peters joined the Peace Corps in 1961 as consultant to the General Counsel. He left the Peace Corps last month to establish a monthly magazine to evaluate government activities.

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ON THE COVER: Philippines Volunteer Larry K. Hanson shows why he thinks some people join the Peace Corps. For a more scientific view, see the results of a Louis Harris poll, starting on page four.

IS THE PEACE CORPS . . .

too much a part of the establishment?

more attractive because joining might help postpone the draft?

less attractive if one doesn't want to work for the government?

muzzling Volunteers from saying what they really think?

a less important alternative than working to solve problems at home?

In December, about 1,000 seniors on 50 campuses answered these questions and others about the Peace Corps and their attitudes toward it. Here, THE VOLUNTEER reports their answers, based on a poll and subsequent study by Louis Harris and Associates.

The Peace Corps on campus

The 1967-68 academic year was an active one on campus. For the Peace Corps—so dependent upon the campus for Volunteers—it was a year of new and difficult challenges, unlike any the agency had faced before.

Peace Corps recruiters spoke to increasing criticism from members of the New Left. Some recruiters were asked by universities to move their recruiting literature, and themselves, from the lobbies of student unions to placement offices. The Peace Corps was accused of being part of the establishment, of muzzling free speech, of being irrelevant. Events made accurate predictions about student thinking difficult: the war in Vietnam, civil rights demonstrations, the draft, the presidential primaries, Johnson's withdrawal, King's assassination and its aftermath.

In the midst of this, the Peace Corps commissioned Louis Harris and Associates to assess the mood on campus and its relation to the Peace Corps. In December, 1967, Harris pollsters surveyed more than 1,000 seniors on 50 campuses. Since then, many events which indicate probable changes in opinions and attitudes have taken place. But the study remains a comprehensive reflection of the concerns of college seniors at one point in this year.

The survey covers the students' interest in the Peace Corps as a personal option, and the Peace Corps in relation to the establishment, the Vietnam war, military service and activism. It parallels one done by the Harris organization for the Peace Corps in the spring of 1966. All comparisons and changes mentioned are in relation to that earlier study.

In December, 1967, there was a slight decline in the percentage of college seniors seriously considering Peace Corps service (from 16 per cent in 1966 to 13 per cent). As in 1966, an additional third of the senior class was giving "some" consideration to joining the Peace Corps.

Of the seniors seriously considering the Peace Corps, 14 per cent actually expected to join this year, compared to 9 per cent in 1966. This increased percentage, together with the fact that the number of seniors had risen since 1966, led the Harris organization to predict the possibility of more applications and more acceptances of invitations this year than last.

To get a general picture of what kinds of students were attracted to the Peace Corps and why, the poll paid special attention to activism as a student characteristic. The study defined activism as "the willingness to participate" and "the fact of participation" in activities such as demonstrations, picketing, signing petitions, etc. To delineate degrees of activism, the Harris organization used a scale of eight such activities (see box). Those students who had participated in at least four of the activities were arbitrarily classified as "most active," those who had participated in two or three as "medium active," and those who participated in one or none as "least active."

In December, 11 per cent of the senior class was in the most active category (3-4 per cent were classified as "extreme activists"), 29 per cent in the medium active group, and 60 per cent in the least active group. The pollsters noted that activism has increased on college campuses: the most active group was up 4 per cent from 1966 and the least active group was down 5 per cent.

How did the various activity groups react to the Peace Corps as an option? As in 1966, the most active students still tended to be the most interested in joining the Peace Corps, the least active students showing the least interest. But the percentages of interest had declined in all groups since 1966 (see graphs).

The biggest drop in interest was in the most active group, especially among the 3-4 per cent classified as "extreme activists." Only 19 per cent of the extreme activists were seriously considering the Peace Corps in December, compared with 40 per cent in 1966. Interest in the most active group as a whole declined from 33 per cent in 1966 to 25 per cent.

Looking at the findings from another perspective, the pollsters found a direct relationship between increased activity and increased interest in the Peace Corps. "While one out of ten in the total senior class is in the most active group," said the study, "one out of five of those seriously considering the Peace Corps is in this most active group." In contrast, 7 per cent of 1966's senior class was in the most active group, while 13 per cent of those seriously considering the Peace Corps were in the most active group.

Interest in the Peace Corps and other areas

Among all the seniors, graduate school was the number-one choice for the immediate future. (It should be noted here that the study was conducted before it was announced that attending graduate school would no longer be a basis for a draft deferment.) Second choices were teaching, the arts, and communication. VISTA emerged as another competitor: one third of those seriously considering the Peace Corps were also seriously considering VISTA, compared to one-fifth in 1966.

Overall, the seniors thought the most important reason for joining the Peace Corps was a chance to "grow personally as an individual through new and challenging experiences." In contrast, there were widespread feelings that preparation for one's future and postponement of entering the routine of middle class life were not very important reasons for joining. With regard to personal benefits to be gained from joining the Peace Corps, most seniors cited the opportunity to travel and learn about other cultures.

In what areas had the Peace Corps been most successful? The seniors answered: personal contact and mutual understanding, establishing a good image of the U.S., improving living standards and helping to alleviate poverty, and education and wiping out illiteracy, in that order.

How had the Peace Corps failed? asked the pollsters. The seniors listed first the need for a larger program, that is, presence in more countries. Following were "not enough funds," and "not promoting real understanding." Those seriously considering the Peace Corps added "a lack of empathy with other cultures" and a "bureaucratic system."

For the total seniors, the most important reason not to join the Peace Corps was low pay, voiced by one-fifth. Of those seriously considering the Peace Corps, one-fifth cited "length of service" as the most important deterrent, and the most active group listed as equally important: "delay in starting a career," "having their future planned," and "not wanting to work for the government."

Generally, those seriously considering the Peace Corps were least involved with career or money pressures, the major reasons why other students hesitated to join.

The Peace Corps' rating and relationship to the establishment

The Peace Corps received a high rating by students, although its popularity had dropped from 86 per cent positive in 1966 to 80 per cent positive in December. The Harris study cited "age" as one of the factors causing the decline.

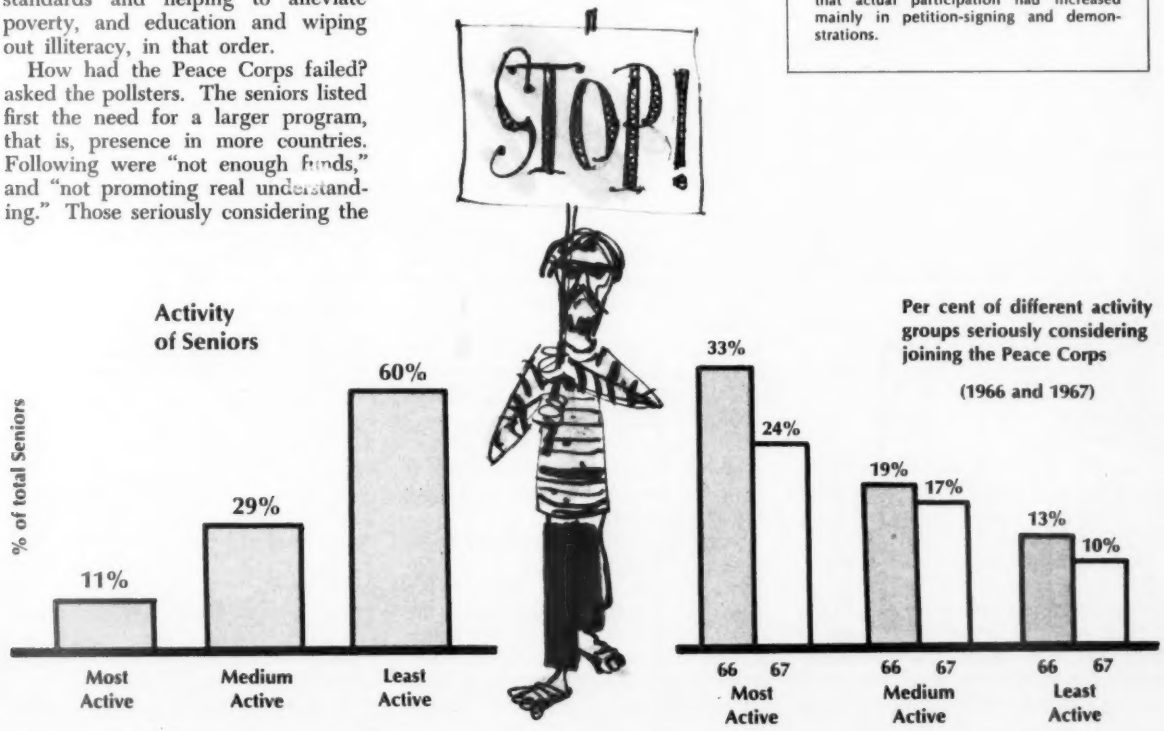
"The Peace Corps," said the study, "has been in existence for seven years, and even with all the good things it has done, it would be difficult to say the world has improved greatly in this period. While no fault of the Peace Corps, of course, this sense of discouragement is bound to gradually dim the excitement and high expectations for an organization which began with such high hopes of change."

WHO WAS AN ACTIVIST?

In the Harris study, he was a student who had done, or would do from one to four of the following:

- **Sign a petition**
- **Participate in a demonstration**
- **Join a picket line**
- **Defy the school authorities**
- **Risk a future security clearance**
- **Violate the law**
- **Go to jail**
- **Participate in civil disobedience**

Students who had participated in at least four of the above activities were classified by the pollsters as "most active," those who had participated in two or three as "medium active," and those who had participated in one or none as "least active." The study reported that "willingness to participate" had gone up since 1966 for most of the activities, but that actual participation had increased mainly in petition-signing and demonstrations.



The class of '68 was larger and more active than the class of '66, but a smaller percentage of this year's seniors were inclined to seriously consider joining the Peace Corps than their predecessors, revealed the Louis Harris poll conducted on 50 campuses in December, 1967.

This year's graduating class thought highly of the Peace Corps, however. They saw the Peace Corps as the program most helping the United States' reputation in the world today. Most of the graduating seniors felt that the Peace Corps had scored its greatest success in the areas of personal contact and mutual understanding. Their most important reasons for joining the Peace Corps were personal: individual growth and challenging experiences. (Their most important reason for not joining was low pay.)

Facing post-Peace Corps military service was not a deterrent to the majority of the class, although most favored Peace Corps service as an alternative to the draft. Most seniors were interested in going to graduate school rather than joining the Peace Corps or doing anything else. A small, but growing, percentage (2-3 per cent), refused to consider entering government service, including the Peace Corps. But most seniors did not consider the Peace Corps too bureaucratic, too much a part of the establishment, or politically partisan.

As a further illustration of the "aging process," the poll noted student reaction to the Peace Corps as an answer to the question: "What two or three things are most helping the reputation of the U.S. in the world today?" In this category, the Peace Corps, as in 1966, emerged with a clear lead in the eyes of the seniors. But the lead (46 per cent compared to the next "most helping" program—foreign aid at 33 per cent) showed a slight decline from the 51 per cent who cited the Peace Corps as "most helping" in 1966.

Returned Volunteers were another facet of the "aging process" which affected the Peace Corps rating on a different matter, according to the Harris study. The poll showed that when seniors who knew a returned Volunteer looked at the Peace Corps as a result of their contact with the RPCV, they viewed the Peace Corps more positively. Most of the seniors (58 per cent compared to 45 per cent in 1966) knew a returned Volunteer, and they had a more favorable impression of the Peace Corps as a result of that contact.

In the minds of the students, according to the pollsters, the Peace Corps had been able to stay relatively clear of bureaucratic and establishment entanglements. For example, only 6 per cent of the seniors volunteered the statement that the Peace Corps was too bureaucratic; only 3 per cent said they would personally hesitate to join because of too much red tape or because they did not want to work for the government.

The seniors' answers to a series of direct questions about the Peace Corps and the establishment also tended to support the pollsters' contention that the Peace Corps had escaped serious criticism in this area —with the exception of the most active group.

The pollsters asked if the following were important reasons for not joining the Peace Corps: "Too many limitations on speaking and acting as you really feel," "Not wanting to work for the government," "Peace Corps becoming too much a part of the establishment," and "Peace Corps has become too bureaucratic."

About 12 per cent of all seniors considered the reasons "very important" deterrents to joining the Peace Corps; about 8 per cent of those seriously considering the Peace Corps thought the reasons were "very important." But about one-third of the most active group generally agreed that the reasons were "very important" ones for not joining the Peace Corps. (The percentages of all groups were slightly lower—7, 4, and 20 respectively—in response to "not wanting to work for the government" as a very important reason.)

According to the Harris organization, two "danger signals for the future" emerged in this area of the study. They were: one-quarter of the seniors agreed that "the Peace Corps has become more interested in improving the United States' image than in helping in other countries." (Sixteen per cent of those seriously considering the Peace Corps and 31 per cent of the most active group also agreed.) And only one-third of the seniors agreed that "it's still possible in the Peace Corps to say what you really think and nobody tries to muzzle you." (This feeling was shared by 40 per cent of those seriously considering the Peace Corps and by one-third of the most active group.)

The Harris study suggested that "part of the seniors' concern over freedom of expression can be dealt with through a mature and frank discussion of the problems of being invited to a host country and the restrictions this may necessitate. The other part of the problem, the ability of Volunteers to freely discuss U.S. foreign policy, is more serious," said the report. "Either Peace Corps policy in this area is not known to the students or it is unacceptable to them."

The Harris poll found some support among the seniors for the idea of internationalizing the Peace Corps. About one-third of the seniors and almost 40 per cent of those seriously considering the Peace Corps said they would be more interested in the Peace Corps if it were an international organization. Interest was even higher among the most active seniors (54 per cent in favor), the group most concerned about the Peace Corps becoming "too establishment," noted the study.

The Peace Corps and attitudes toward Vietnam

The poll reported that the Peace Corps "has been successful in not equating its existence with support or opposition to Vietnam." Sixty-four to 18 per cent, the seniors rejected the idea that "if you really are strongly opposed to the war in Vietnam, the Peace Corps is probably not interested in having you join." However, one-quarter of the seniors agreed that "a lot of people who might have joined the Peace Corps a few years ago are staying away because of their opposition to U.S. policy in Vietnam." This figure rose to 41 per cent among the most active. The report noted that "the inevitable fall-out of an anti-government position on the war has had an impact on attitudes toward the Peace Corps."

On the other hand, half of the seniors felt a "very important" reason for joining the Peace Corps was "to counteract the ugly American abroad."

"It is important to realize," noted

the poll, "that it is not just a question of 'image,' but of reality, of the means used to achieve the kind of world the students want. To many, whatever Vietnam represents, the Peace Corps represents peace and construction."

The Peace Corps and military service

In December, the prospect of military service did not appear to be a critical issue for the Peace Corps, the pollsters reported. (Again, the study was conducted before the change in graduate school and occupational deferments.) Only 8 per cent of the male seniors felt "postponing serving in the military until the Vietnam war is over" was a very important reason for joining the Peace Corps. Only in the most active group did support for postponement as a very important reason for joining rise to 15 per cent. Turning the question around, 18 per cent of the male seniors thought the delay of inevitable military service was a very important reason for not joining the Peace Corps.

In the realm of conjecture, however, one out of five male seniors agreed that "the possibility of postponing the draft for two years makes the Peace Corps look a lot more attractive to me than it did a few years ago." This feeling was shared by one-fourth of the men seriously considering the Peace Corps and by one-third of the men in the most active group.

The pollsters queried all seniors about the Peace Corps as a substitute for military service. Close to 60 per cent of the senior class thought the Peace Corps should be a substitute for military service (compared to 48 per cent in 1966). Only one out of seven agreed that "if a college graduate really wants to help the U.S. in this time of crisis, he should think seriously about becoming an officer in the military rather than joining the Peace Corps."

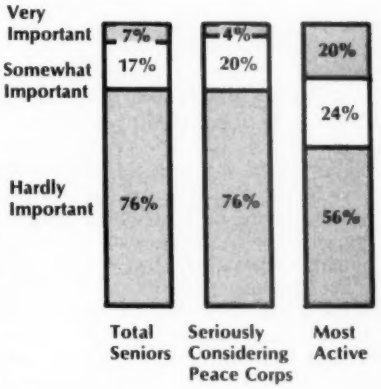
The study observed that the prospect of military service was only a secondary or supportive factor in students' thinking about joining the Peace Corps. And the factor worked two ways: "Interest in the Peace Corps is cut by the prospect of two years in the military. Particularly in terms of career delays, four years is simply too long for the majority of students," said the report.

On the other hand, the study said, "For those who are seriously considering the Peace Corps and who are less concerned about career delays, the prospect of military service may provide an additional inducement to become a Volunteer. . . ."

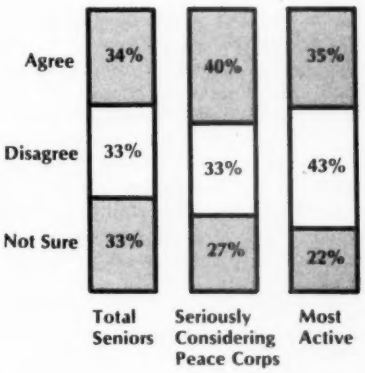
The Peace Corps and activism

According to the Harris poll, one of the charges made against the more active students on campus and against those most opposed to the U.S. policy in Vietnam is that they have become neo-isolationists—that they would turn their backs on the rest of the world to concentrate on domestic problems. In December, this charge was rejected by the seniors. Fifty-nine per cent of them, along with 62 per cent of the most active, disagreed that "there are enough problems in the U.S. and some-

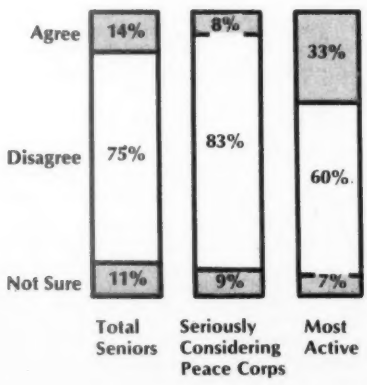
"Not wanting to work for the government is a very important reason for joining the Peace Corps."



"It's still possible in the Peace Corps to say what you really think and nobody there tries to muzzle you."



"The Peace Corps is becoming too much a part of the establishment and is not the place for someone who really wants to preserve his own identity."



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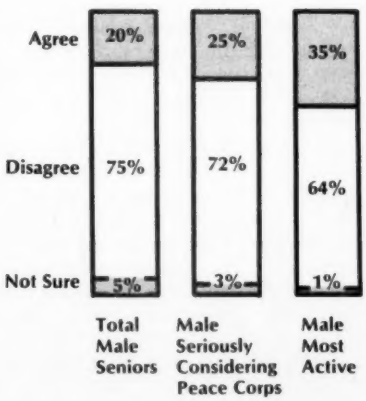
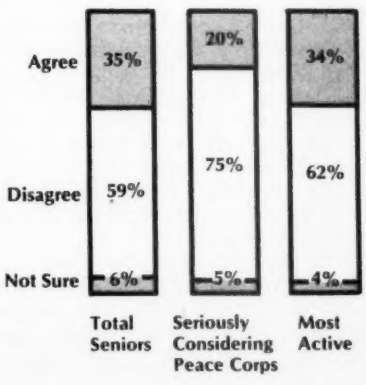


"Concerned individuals should work in the United States rather than abroad with the Peace Corps."



one who is really concerned about helping others should be working against the problems here rather than going abroad with the Peace Corps."

The pollsters sought opinions on a number of issues: the right to protest the Vietnam war, the manner of protest, attitudes toward civil rights protests, the use of force to achieve equality, the student voice on campus.

The right to protest the war in Vietnam, for example, was strongly supported by all students. But they believed, with equal strength, that this protest should be kept within peaceful and lawful limits. They consequently rejected civil disobedience, active resistance, and refusal to serve in the armed forces as valid forms of protest. According to the study, those seriously considering the Peace Corps were more like the total senior class than the most active group in the modes of protest they found acceptable. However, the individual act of draft resistance met with more approval from the group that was seriously considering the Peace Corps than from the seniors generally.

"In terms of a spectrum of support for radical protest," concluded the poll, "those seriously considering the Peace Corps fall somewhere between the total group of seniors on their right and the most active group on their left. They currently reject the appeal of the more radical groups because they distrust the means these groups would use to achieve their goals."

But the pollsters would not have the Peace Corps underestimate the possible influence of the most active group on those seriously considering the Peace Corps: "The most active group has staked out a moral position on issues which is viewed sympathetically by many of those seriously considering the Peace Corps; and one important attribute of this moral position is that it finds itself in opposition to established governmental policies and practices.

"Looking to the future, if this opposition continues to grow and the most active group continues to increase, interest in the Peace Corps might be nibbled away from the left end of the activity spectrum . . ." noted the study.

"If this is to be avoided," said the report, "the Peace Corps must make it as clear as possible on the college campuses that it is independent and offers the opportunity for personal and effective involvement in the struggle to improve society throughout the world."

Other items

The rate of interest in the Peace Corps has switched between the sexes. In December, 1967, women expressed much more interest in the Peace Corps than men, to the extent that twice the proportion of women compared with men were seriously considering joining the Peace Corps. However, since men represent two-thirds of the senior class, the same number of women and men were interested in the Peace Corps.

There were more activists among the seniors this year, but degree of activity didn't necessarily match political stripe. For example, of the most active, 27 per cent considered themselves radicals, 52 per cent liberals, 14 per cent middle of the roaders, and 7 per cent conservatives. The least active group considered itself almost evenly divided between conservatives, middle of the roaders and liberals.

The majority of all seniors agreed that the Vietnam war was the one thing that most hurt the reputation of the U.S. in the world today. But they did not agree on a solution. Of the total seniors, one-fifth favored "fighting on to a total military victory," 41 per cent favored "fighting until we achieve a negotiated peace," and 35 per cent "trying to get out as quickly as possible."

Only one in ten of those seriously considering joining the Peace Corps favored a total military victory, slightly more than one-third favored a negotiated peace, and slightly less than one-half favored getting out as quickly as possible.

A much higher proportion of the most active, nearly three-quarters, preferred to see the U.S. get out as quickly as possible.

Peace Corps facts for Fiscal Year 1969

The Peace Corps plans and projects for Fiscal Year 1969 have been presented to Congress. Included in the presentation:

The Peace Corps has asked Congress for $112.8 million for its operations for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The request marks an increase of $5.3 million over the amount appropriated ($107.5 million) for the current fiscal year.

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The budget request will provide for 9,200 trainees, permitting the Peace Corps to reach a projected level of 15,200 Volunteers and trainees by August 31, 1969. This is an increase of 630 Volunteers and trainees over the current program year ending this August 31.

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The average cost per Volunteer is projected at $7,762 for FY '69, an increase of $70 over the current fiscal year. That includes everything from pre-selection expenses to administrative costs. The rise is attributed to the Federal pay raise, the impact of direct-hire physicians rather than Public Health Service physicians, additional administrative expenses and mandatory payments to other agencies.

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Volunteer living allowances averaged $97 per month during FY '67 and are estimated to have increased $6 per year in FY '68 and '69.

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The average salary for permanent employees in Washington is projected at $9,848 for FY '69. The average salary for overseas employees who are U.S. nationals is projected at $13,056.

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Host countries will contribute an estimated $3.5 million to the Peace Corps in FY '69, about the same amount they have contributed each year during the last four years.

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Overall, the Peace Corps budget will be divided among four major functions. Overseas program costs will receive the largest single portion of the projected funds, $39.2 million. Training and administrative expenses will each be allotted $30.3 million. The remainder of the funds will go to readjustment allowances ($12.3 million) and miscellaneous ($.7 million).

What America—and Americans—need most today is the interpersonal experience of working and living

Inside other cultures

By LAWRENCE H. FUCHS

What relevance does the Peace Corps have for the sensitive, probing, young people of the United States? Has the Peace Corps gone establishment? Has it become a victim of bureaucratic hardening of the arteries? Is it a form of cultural or some other kind of American imperialism?

These are tough and legitimate questions. They have been asked frequently this year, of Peace Corps recruiters and others. Something had gone wrong and young people knew it. Many of them smelled the awful odor of goodness about the Peace Corps and recoiled at the thought of doing good against people. Some learned it through the innumerable failures of whites who attempted to join the black revolution for the wrong reasons and failed in their efforts at a helping relationship. Others recoiled at the events in Vietnam; they knew that villages were being destroyed in the name of saving their people for America's idea of freedom and democracy. Some heard of the stories of frustration and defeat of the self-consciously good Peace Corps Volunteers who attempted to live out the ideals of their culture by bringing literacy, plumbing, and all manner of material things to the so-called underdeveloped people.

As I tried to point out in my book, *"Those Peculiar Americans": The Peace Corps and American National Character,* an increasing number of young Americans have become all too aware of the human cost in this country of equating developments in technology and social organization with human development. They find missing in their own lives relationships of intimacy and affection and feel deeply the psychological isolation that foreigners have long seen as the peculiar affliction of Americans.

Search for effectiveness

Their desire to do good and to be effective was whetted by Peace Corps' advertisements and occasional stories of heroic feats of the young men and women who developed cottage industries, built libraries, or increased agricultural production. The Peace Corps symbolized the best of the American messianic tradition in taking America's message of the moral virtues of self-sufficiency and advanced technology and organization to the rest of the world. For many students it became another in a long line of misguided attempts to remake others in the image of the white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant American; missionary teachers in China; secular teachers in the Philippines; the Freedmen's Bureau; Dwight Moody's evangelical movement at the turn of the twentieth century, and aspects of the civil rights movement itself.

Now, with the revulsion against a society advanced technologically, but high in suicide rates and crimes of sex and violence, beset by racial warfare, bereft of loving, empathetic relationships in families, even the Peace Corps' rose was bound to lose its bloom.

Yet, if my argument is correct, these students are misreading the fundamental value and character of the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps is not an answer to what the rest of the world needs most. It is an answer to what Americans need most: to learn how to relate sensitively and empathetically with each other and with persons in other cultures and to learn how to ask assumption-challenging questions which break through the ethnocentrism in which nearly all of us are raised and bound.

Even if it were not for Vietnam and racial warfare, Americans would be in deep trouble. The middle class rush to psychiatrists and T-groups is symptomatic, as much as curative, of the recognized incapacity of Americans to

give and receive love. The solipsistic individualism for which Americans have been famous through the eyes of foreign visitors and immigrants is now recognized by young Americans themselves. They cling fast to their independence, wanting choices as much as ever, even as they are increasingly burdened by them. But they are ever more aware of the terrible human cost of the cult of individualism, and especially that of individualistic, competitive achievement. They see a culture which worships achievement through the measurement of things. It is not technology but a technologizing nation which repels them. They see families which pretend to be families: men and women, parents and children, living under the same roof, but rarely relating to each other in meaningful ways. And they sense that something is deeply wrong.

A Thai graduate student, receiving her M.A. in psychology this year, came into my office the other day. She spoke of her growing understanding of the deep failure of Americans to be happy in relationships. Quite correctly, in my view, she saw the failure as a price we have paid for an exaggerated emphasis on individual achievement through technology. She even related the heavily behavioristic and reductionistic psychological courses which she was obliged to take to what she considers to be a fundamental failure of humanism in this country. And I couldn't help but agree. Then she told me that she hadn't realized any of this from knowing Peace Corps Volunteers well in Thailand, where she taught language, because they seemed to be keenly sensitive to human relationships. It wasn't just that they learned to speak Thai so well; they learned to feel with the Thais, not *always* successfully, but at least *sometimes*. She said nothing of the achievements of American Volunteers, whether teaching or in community development or in any other respect, but she remembered well the human qualities of the Volunteers and contrasted them with those of her fellow graduate students in the United States.

Thousands of ex-Volunteers would agree with her view. Perhaps they would be even more harsh in assessing the impersonality of American life because they have felt its pain. Perhaps they would emphasize American racism and violence, and understate the vast contributions Americans have made to human advancement.

In reaction to that racism and violence, many young Americans have turned inward. They seek new ways of learning how to be better human beings than by remaking or reshaping the peoples of cultures vastly different from their own. Some have turned inward to action programs to help their own country as well as themselves. They have enlisted under the banners of Kennedy and McCarthy in the hope of a new politics which seeks to avoid illusion and deceit. They have looked to VISTA, the Teacher Corps, aspects of the anti-poverty program, and work in various helping professions in order to make their own country a more human one.

Service for oneself

But far too many are missing the contribution which the Peace Corps has to make in their own lives and for America. They do not understand as well as my friend from Thailand that service in the Peace Corps is primarily service for oneself. More than any other way I know, living deeply in another culture—with an open heart and open mind—enables young people to gain perspective to see their own situation, personal and national, more clearly. It doesn't work with everyone; but it does for many. Living deeply in another culture—particularly those steeped in traditional ways of doing things and which emphasize sensitivity and reciprocity in loving, mutual relationships—also can open for young people new ways of seeing the course of human development.

Americans have long assumed that change equals progress. Working, living, and loving in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America have shown thousands of Peace Corps Volunteers the falsity of that assumption. And now, more than ever, Americans should be asking assumption-challenging questions.

All people are ethnocentric in their own way. American ethnocentrism is centered mainly on a blind faith in modernity which means essentially increasing the control of one's environment through the independence and equality of men and women in the exercise of choice with respect to jobs, leaders, religions, mates, friends and things. It is a faith which many Peace Corps Volunteers would say—and which I say—has crippled the capacity of many Americans to lead giving or loving relationships or to appreciate mystery. Generations of Americans have followed the advice of the influential American behaviorist, John B. Watson, author of *Psychological Care of Infant and Child*, who warned American mothers that the worst affliction which could come to their children would be for them to be "dependent" so as to limit their capacities in "conquering the world." At the end of his book, Watson wrote that a child who can cope with the demands of American society will be "as free as possible of sensitivities to people and one who, almost from birth, is relatively independent from the family situation." He will be, as Watson recommended, ". . . involved in boundless absorption in activity." I know of no other, better way than service in the Peace Corps in traditional societies to perceive the dehumanizing effects of such advice.

Peace Corps service means that Americans can look at other ways of raising children, treating the aged, protecting spouses, and building communities of loyalty and friendship. The Volunteer who serves in Tunisia, the Philippines or India—not to conquer or remake the culture of the host countries, but to learn from them—will be able to ask an entire, new set of tough questions about himself and his own country. This is far from saying that he will lose or should lose his identity as an American. It is to say that he may develop the capacity to transcend his ethnocentrism and to grow beyond it.

If the white, middle class, young,

American men and women want to relate to the black revolution in America, they will learn how to begin to look at the black man from his point of view through practice in empathy in the Peace Corps. They will learn patience and how to live with troubled, perplexed and often pained feelings. Because they will begin to ask new kinds of questions—not just typically American, Emersonian or Jeffersonian types of questions—they will be launched toward a more effective way of learning how to help poor and exploited men of any color or nationality.

A learning experience

At the very least, those who use their Peace Corps time well, far from avoiding their own search for inner growth or for a better America, may have taken the most realistic and effective path toward those ends. They may find with T. S. Eliot that by not ceasing from exploration, they "will . . . arrive where we started and know the place for the *first* time" (italics mine).

Remarkably enough, then, the Peace Corps, which started in the messianic tradition of America, should be understood as an important—perhaps singular—attempt of Americans to learn from the rest of the world how to grow as human beings. Remarkably, too, such a vision is not inconsistent with assisting other people in their aspirations for longer and better lives. Better health, learning English, understanding science, improving food production are all goals which are not inconsistent with our own quest for human development through Peace Corps service. I have long been convinced—ever since studying the records of the more than 600 Volunteers who served with me in the Philippines—that the failure of Americans to break the prison of ethnocentrism has been an obstacle in helping other countries to achieve those aspects of modernity which will improve their lives. For it is romantic nonsense to believe that better health and increased technology are inevitable enemies of human advancement. It may be the special task of the Peace Corps to assist other nations in showing that high material standards of living do not necessarily bring the estrangement of man from nature, self and others.

One of the extraordinary paradoxes of Peace Corps service, I believe, is that one finds that, in a helping relationship across cultures, the desire to grow on a mutual basis has a much better chance of resulting in improved living standards for the host country than in a highly structured, programmatic drive to remake the culture and institutions of the host society. A letter from one of the most outstanding Peace Corps Volunteers from Group I in the Philippines, now a linguist, makes the point in connection with English language teaching. He writes, "One of the things most wrong . . . is that the Volunteers have become 'professionals.' They still don't tie into the real world of Filipino kids. Language learning is still too much a PR trick." He argues that people should not be inducted into Western culture and that even in mathematics, we must know more about "indigenous mathematics" to teach the new. He writes, "It isn't just that the American Volunteer cannot speak the language. How many Peace Corps Volunteers teaching math in the Philippines know anything about measures, for instance, for rice: *kasong, lata, ganta*? Or the hand measures for cloth or old newspapers: *palad, damak, dangkl*? We presume to teach inductive science lessons on the weather, teaching as though the child were a blank slate, and perhaps an American is, but so many are the children of fishermen and especially Filipino fishermen who have been carefully observing the weather and its effects on the seas and their world for centuries. It is folly to teach weather science without first investigating their knowledge and building on it."

The point, as the writer says, is to get inside the cognitive systems of the culture. It is not enough to bring in questions from the outside and to find answers in the new environment. Rather, "one should find also the questions on the inside that go together with the answers."

In my view, this is a much more realistic approach to a helping relationship across cultures. Americans have much to learn, not only for their own sakes, but for the sake of the world. Until the message gets across that this is largely what the Peace Corps is about, it will not approach an ever growing number of sensitive young people of this country who—and here I speak not merely of a fad for only one generation—have a new understanding of patriotism which is not sufficient to give meaning to their lives. They will be appealed to by programs such as the one proposed by the Education Development Center recently for Africa, which would have Volunteers work under Africans in developing curricula on African physical and cultural environments for African and American schools, because they will sense their own possibilities for growth more than through programs which bring the word of how to do it to the needy Africans.

Message for the young

The Peace Corps should face squarely what I see as a fact of fundamental change in important segments of the youth culture today which makes the potential relevance of the Peace Corps for Americans and the future of this country even greater than before; the Peace Corps can and should tell young Americans that we need the world, as individuals and a nation, even more than they need us if we are not to become the Rome of the twentieth century whose aqueducts still stand, but from whose profound human failures we have not recovered or learned.

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A strangely familiar ghost

By STEVE CLAPP

The Ugly American is dead. You remember him, the one who went out and lived with the natives and learned their language and ate their food and helped them. He is dead. We killed him. You and I, the soldiers in Vietnam, the hippies, the Black Power people, everybody. He died of exposure, and no amount of wishful thinking will bring him back to life.

The Ugly American was a powerful hero to those of us in the early Peace Corps. Back then, when you wanted to know what the program was all about, you opened your footlocker and took out the well-thumbed paperback. Inside, there was this guy who went out and lived with the natives and learned their language and ate their food and helped them. He was great. The greatest thing was that you could do it too.

The Ugly American had flaws, but we didn't notice them. He was created at a time when people believed that the United States had everything to teach and nothing to learn. We didn't stop to think that the only real difference between the Ugly American and his fumbling counterparts lay in technique. At bottom, he had no more feeling for his hosts' way of life than ordinary technicians, but he was willing to penetrate an alien culture in order to succeed. He was the paternalistic missionary in the guise of technician.

Now he is dead. He is a casualty of the growing distrust of paternalistic solutions to social problems. In the Peace Corps, this distrust takes the form of renewed emphasis on sensitivity as opposed to single-minded expertise. "American Volunteers have in general been content to import their own value system into this vastly different cultural context and make it do," writes Lawrence J. O'Brien in the February VOLUNTEER. "As representatives of the most powerful technological society in the world, we must be prepared to approach the African villager in the first place with questions rather than answers."

Unfortunately, as the Peace Corps has begun to ask questions about its role, the demand for answers has escalated. I suspect that this is less due to the much-touted "bureaucratization" of the agency than to host governments, which are under intense political pressure to provide the technical services of the West. One hears brave talk on the abstract level about manpower needs and developmental goals. Host countries are assured that proper selection and training will manufacture technicians out of generalists. The critics call for better planning, wider recruitment of technicians, more training for generalists, and greater "commitment" for all, as though success could somehow be willed into existence by hard work and purity of motive. What was spontaneous in the Ugly American has now hardened into dogma.

"Volunteers today don't want to do a job," I was told by a returned Volunteer who has become a program planner. "They all want to do their own thing."

I am sure this observation is accurate. Today's Volunteer is a sophisticated young American in search of meaningful adventure. He has far more political and cultural sensitivity than we in the early Peace Corps ever had. He is nobody's fool. Placed in a situation that makes sensible use of his skills, he flowers forth in unexpectedly productive ways. But he wants spontaneity, not technique. He wants a role in which he can be resourceful, not functional. He refuses to be regarded as a "manpower input" in somebody's Grand Design for development. Even those Volunteers who do possess the skills required to serve as technical functionaries regard their successes as morally ambiguous. To quote Rod French in the March VOLUNTEER, "The intelligent returned Peace Corps Volunteer is right to wonder occasionally just how history will see his service in relation to various neo-colonialisms."

This is not to say that the Peace Corps has become irrelevant or self-serving. Rather, it is time to exorcise the ghost of the Ugly American and start viewing Volunteers as they are, not as the nostalgic would like them to be. To paraphrase Mr. O'Brien, we must be prepared to approach the Volunteer in the first place with questions rather than answers. Is today's Volunteer right in refusing to identify with the host country technostructure? Is he right in wanting to discover "his own thing" with respect to the host community? Is the non-aggressive Volunteer more successful in the long run than his gung-ho counterpart? I would hesitate to answer no to any of these questions.

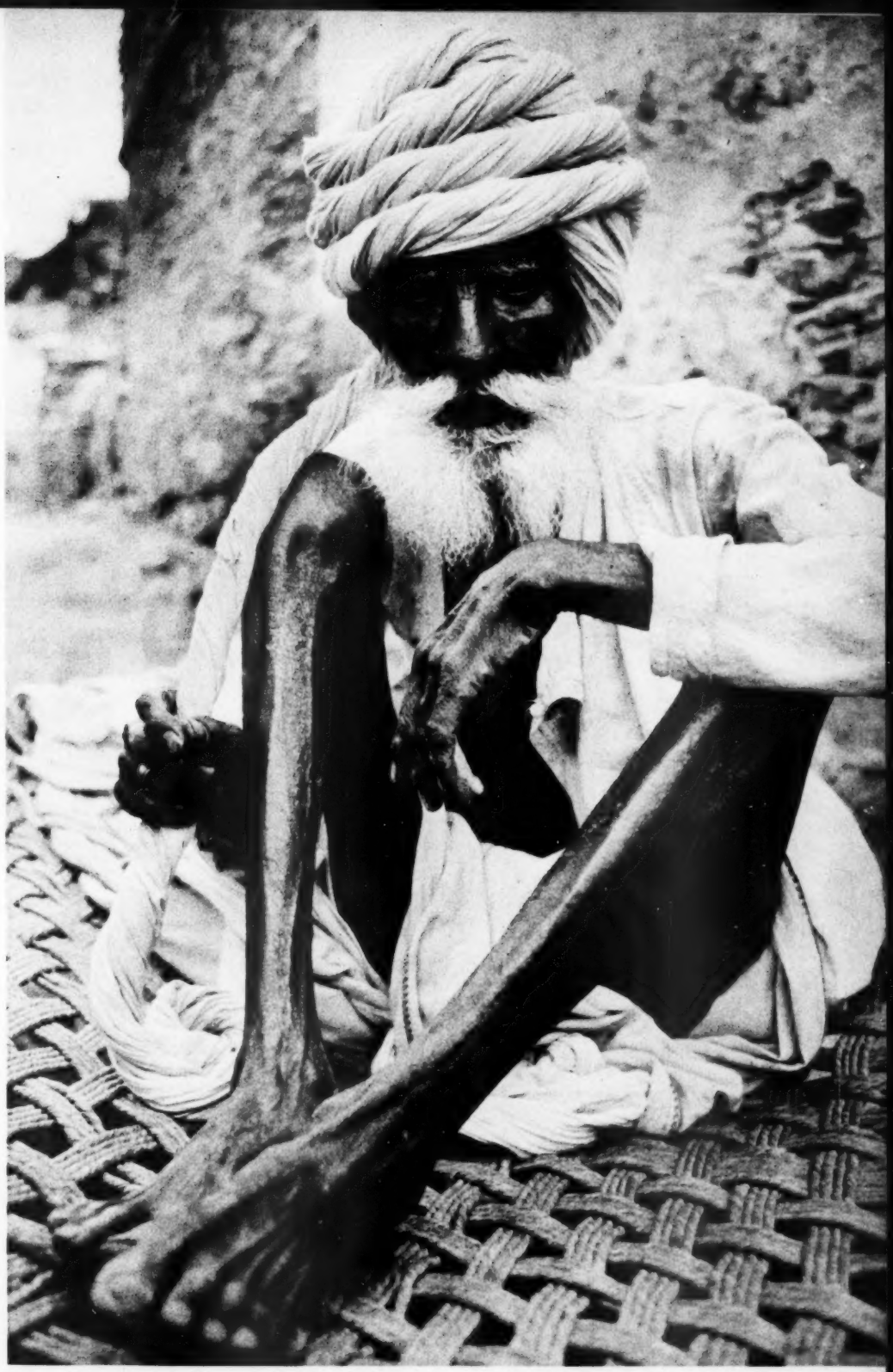
I am not suggesting that the Peace Corps abandon administration for anarchy. It is the agency's challenging task to reconcile the emotional perceptions of Volunteers with the political demands of their hosts. The new nations are no longer eager for generalists, especially when they can see Western nations hiring away the few technicians that they themselves have produced. But wishful thinking and appeals to altruism will not solve such problems. A truly realistic Peace Corps would discourage requests for technicians when they are simply not available. It would resist the pressure for "results" and instead negotiate a wide spectrum of assignments to fit present attitudes. For example, if Volunteers are demonstrably unhappy as agriculturists, let the Peace Corps cease trying to manufacture agriculturists. A much more creative role exists for the rural agent, who serves as a resourceful liaison with existing technical services.

The Ugly American is dead. His successors are artists, not technicians. Administratively, they are untidy. They make mistakes. Like African villagers, they spend much of their time in seemingly unproductive activity. But untidiness is the price of freedom. By not insisting on predetermined results, the Peace Corps has enabled Americans to absorb the messages of the pre-industrial societies —lessons in ease and movement, form and feeling. As exuberant explorers of cultures, sensitized to environmental change, Volunteers are equipped to shape the post-industrial society of tomorrow. Perhaps the Peace Corps can paraphrase for its use the Balinese saying made popular by Marshall McLuhan: "In the Peace Corps we have no technicians; we simply do everything as well as possible."

Steve Clapp taught English in Nigeria during 1963-64. He now evaluates anti-poverty programs for the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D. C.

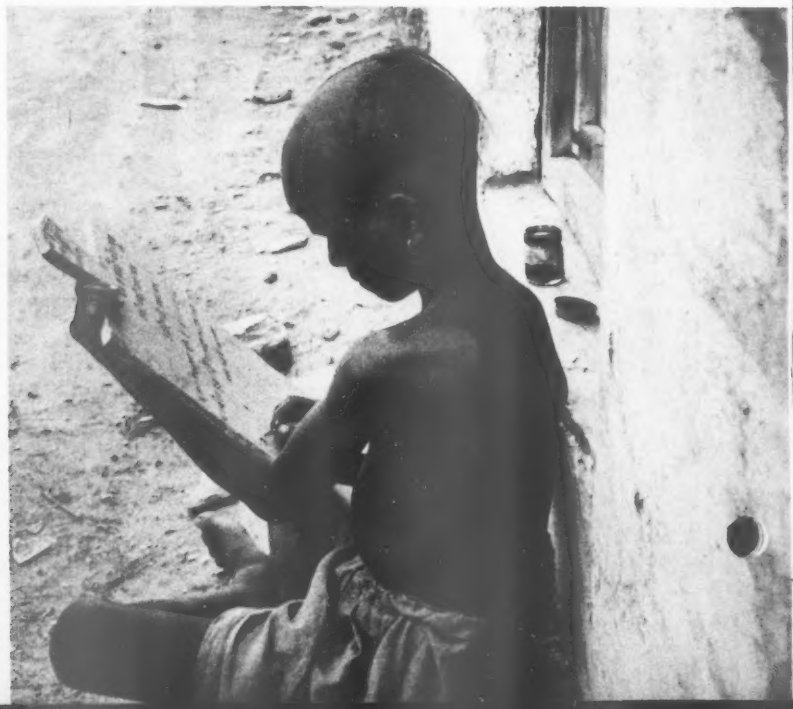
INDIA

By Tomas Sennett

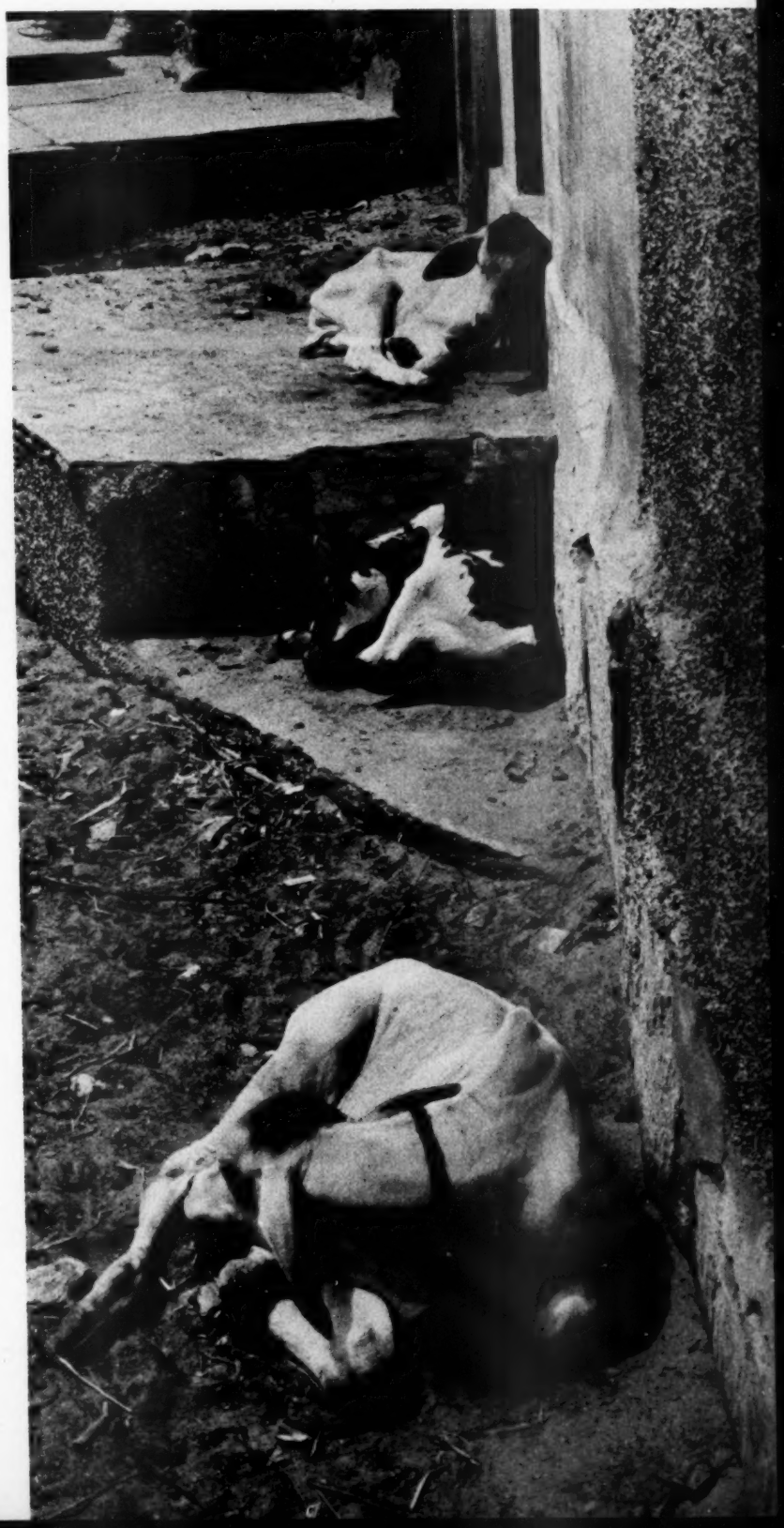


Shri Lal, about 80 years old, sits on his charpoy all day receiving the nods of the villagers. Great respect is shown the very old in India, where the average life span is about 45 years.

After the monsoon, the grass grows green and lush. These women cut the grass, sell some, and bring the rest home for family animals.



The son of a shopkeeper, this schoolboy practices writing with a pen and a wooden tablet.



Summer brings newborn calves, who curl up in the sun and sleep all day.

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Early morning finds mother and child preparing chappaties (wheat cakes) for the day.

Maryanne Sennett works in a small nutrition clinic. These children, of fair health, are brought to the clinic by their mothers to receive free milk and vitamins.

An ox cart — one of millions on the road — passes by on a rainy afternoon.

Tomas Sennett was a Volunteer in India during 1966-67. A former correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER, he worked in community development in Srinagar, Rajasthan.

A Volunteer examines the causes and effects of

A Peace Corps disease

By ROBERT HARCHAREK

Sakol Nakorn, Thailand

Have you ever awakened one morning, looked into a mirror and found that you looked rather peaked, if not downright ill? At a recent Teaching English as a Foreign Language conference in Thailand, that's what happened. Simultaneously, or so it seemed, a small but representative cross-section of the Volunteers looked into themselves and Peace Corps Thailand with alarming dismay. The consensus was that someplace, somebody made a mistake or a number of mistakes. Something was wrong.

The affliction seemed non-specific, but appeared to be a conglomeration of minor troubles which, when looked at individually, seemed to be of no consequence. Taken collectively, however, they called for consultation.

Cautiously, these few Volunteers proceeded to glean reactions from everyone present, from the newest Volunteers to the most seasoned staff members. The reactions added breadth and depth to the idea that something was wrong. To diagnose the disease is to give it a very ordinary name—mediocrity. It is afflicting Peace Corps Thailand and probably other countries as well. The symptoms are many and varied. The causes need to be examined. The treatment appears questionable. It has not reached epidemic stages, although the disease is contagious. To the layman, it might even appear that no such disease exists, but if one looks closely enough, he can detect its symptoms in numerous parts of Peace Corps Thailand.

Symptoms are obvious

In some Volunteers, the symptoms can most readily be observed by other Volunteers. They can see Volunteers who have no commitment at all to the Peace Corps and its goals. One will hear comments ranging from "Don't try to talk to *me* about the Peace Corps ideals garbage" to "The only reason I'm in the Peace Corps and haven't terminated early is that I don't want to be a soldier." In between, you hear: "I'd go home, but what would I do there?" "I can have a vacation here for a couple of years or so and then go home and get into a good position because I'll be a former Volunteer." "It's good to be away from home. I do a lot more things here than I could ever get away with there." "Being a Volunteer here is very comfortable, to say the least."

Individual motives for joining the Peace Corps are different for each person, and they are not important because even some of the most idealistic persons become poor Volunteers. If one joined the Peace Corps to avoid the draft or to get away from personal problems—whatever the reason—it doesn't matter. What is important, however, is what he does once he is a Volunteer, because the Peace Corps is a vehicle through which America approach the people of other lands as equals, as partners, and as fellow human beings, willing to share the skills and work needed to build a better life for all. The Volunteer is more than just one of the group who inquires into various problems and helps with them. Even though he possesses biases and predispositions, he must be constantly aware of the fact that the non-American with whom he works will often acquire the attitudes he sees in the Volunteer.

Both the Volunteer who does only a token amount of work during his service and the enthusiastic Volunteer will probably leave strong impressions on the people with whom they worked and lived. The impressions may be long-lasting, but surely they will not be the same. Work is important, for through it the Volunteer imparts knowledge and techniques of modern life. But leisure is something that is usually acquired through hard work. The Volunteer who does almost nothing for two years is enjoying his leisure at a cost of approximately $15,000 to his fellow Americans. A Volunteer must have an awareness of the conditions of society and must become interested in doing something about them. He must work during his Peace Corps service.

The host country wants Volunteers to work as technicians, teachers, etc. It is not of prime importance that Volunteers be completely successful in these projects, but it is important that they enthusiastically attempt to use their ingenuity and drive to exist in a foreign culture in which learning the language and ways of the people is a vehicle to mutual understanding between nations and their varied cultures. The individual is the important factor in the Peace Corps. If he is good, the Peace Corps is great. If he is mediocre, the Peace Corps loses its brilliance.

Other apparent symptoms of mediocrity take the form of biases against the host country nationals. These biases range from slight irritation to complete lack of interest and consideration. The Volunteer tries to justify these feelings by commenting that the host country nationals are lazy, that they are not interested, or that they do not care about bettering themselves. The Volunteer, in such instances, often acquires the characteristics he incorrectly observed in the

people with whom he worked.

Another common symptom of this disease is known as the "bitch." It is apparent whenever a number of Volunteers get together. The complaints are most often childish or immature with respect to the Peace Corps, its purposes and goals. "I want to transfer from my village because there's nothing there for me." "Some Volunteers have all the luck. He's living in the capital." "I'm wasting my time in my village, because the people will never use what I show them." "I wish that I could be near a big city so that I could have some social life." "I wish I could live near the ocean; my area has nothing." Comments such as these are far too common.

One particular strain of mediocrity manifests itself in what seems to be two diametrically opposing manners. In certain instances, the victim seems to be excessively frugal. For him, the monthly living allowance also allows for extraordinary activities during vacation, a growing bank account or something similar. Frugality may be a virtue, but when it reaches the point where co-workers and other host country nationals, as well as non-Peace Corps Americans, comment on its excessiveness, something is wrong. It is not uncommon to hear comments about how stingy Peace Corps Volunteers are.

In a country where it is both a cultural privilege and a duty to treat and be treated, the Volunteer who continuously receives, but rarely reciprocates, the generosity of the host nationals is completely out of line with Peace Corps goals and the culture of the country in which he is working. Sometimes, treating necessitates sacrificing more elaborate vacation plans or having no balance in one's bank account, but the living allowance was meant to be utilized, not hoarded.

Money widens gulf

The other species of the same strain is the recipient of "Care parcels" from across the seas. Gifts and certain necessities are not included in the criticized items, but money is—because it can widen the distance between the Volunteer and the host nationals. When it is used for vacationing or social excursions, it separates the Volunteer from the host nationals.

Even if the Volunteer uses the money to treat the host nationals to social activities or even drinking sprees, it soon becomes mistakenly obvious to the host nationals that Volunteers are merely wealthy Americans.

The living allowance rate was established so that the Volunteer could live at approximately the same level as his co-workers. Nothing additional was intended and anything additional could cause problems of which Volunteers might not even be aware. What kind of situation would exist if a "financially well-to-do Volunteer," as described above, was replaced by one who didn't have any additional financial support? It could be socially difficult for him to try to change the image set by his predecessor.

A fourth strain of the disease of mediocrity usually seems to affect only Volunteers who have been in the country for at least a year, but there are some reported cases among fledgling Volunteers as well. This strain is hard to describe precisely, but it is often characterized by a display of superiority based on a Volunteer's feelings that after one year he has experienced or done so much. This affliction is not only visible to newly arrived Volunteers, but also to non-Peace Corps Americans with whom Volunteers come into contact. These other Americans are very critical observers and, whether the Volunteer likes it or not, his actions reflect upon the reputation of the Peace Corps. When these other Americans acidly comment to other Volunteers and Americans on the haughtiness of Peace Corps Volunteers, it is not complimentary to, nor advantageous for, the Peace Corps. When similar comments are voiced by host country nationals, something is definitely wrong.

One host country national, after derogatorily criticizing the actions and behavior of a Volunteer, elaborated by commenting on the Volunteer's lack of maturity and asking whether or not this was true of all Volunteers. He said, "I cannot see how a young American with only three months of technical training can tell me everything I am doing wrong and what I *must* do to do my job well. If he *offered suggestions*, and I thought they might work, I would try them, but he is young enough to be my son."

When Volunteers remark that they wish the staff would not interfere with what they are doing, most observers would agree that this is also a manifestation of immaturity. Either the Volunteer does not realize that staff members hold their respective positions because they have proved themselves capable, or the Volunteer is dissatisfied with his work as a Volunteer, or is unsure of himself. In most instances, the staff does not interfere. But it must be remembered that one of the duties of the staff is to be versed in what Volunteers are attempting and accomplishing. In the ideal situation, there would be little need for an "in-country administrative staff," but the ideal situation calls for mature and dedicated Volunteers.

Toward a cure

As one can see, there are many strains of the "disease" of mediocrity. Some Volunteers will never be afflicted by it. Some wouldn't care if they were. A small number probably will never realize that they have it. The majority of Volunteers, however, will observe it in some form or other. Many will say or do nothing because they observe it in friends or close acquaintances.

After a disease has been diagnosed, it must be cured. Many cures for mediocrity have been suggested, but only time will tell which ones, or which combinations of them, will work. Some of them seem to be very mild; others, rather traumatic. In mild cases, the staff and fellow Volunteers can help the afflicted Volunteer in regaining strength by offering support and suggestions. In severe cases, however, the only cure would be a complete purging or expulsion from the system. Granted, the last alternative might be hard to take, but when a part of a living body becomes defective, it must be repaired or replaced.

In most cases, however, the disease can be prevented, as can smallpox. Smallpox requires a vaccination which is sometimes painful, but usually just irritating. Similarly, most strains of mediocrity can be prevented by very stringent selection criteria in training. The argument for giving the borderline cases a chance to prove themselves overseas is no longer valid. Preventive medicine in the long run is usually more effective and easier to take than corrective medicine. It is true that the selection process deals with human beings, but it is often forgotten that if the borderline case becomes a poor Volunteer overseas, he will also be working with human beings—human beings who do not deserve to be experimented with.

Robert Harcharek, a correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER, *has been teaching English in Thailand for a year.*

Selection talks back:

An old dilemma

By BELA O. BAKER

Don McClure, and presumably the Turkey Volunteer task forces, seems to be hooked on the horns of an old dilemma: on the one hand selection is hard, unpleasant, tension producing and on the other hand it is necessary (May VOLUNTEER). Unhappily, it does take more than a vision to serve and McClure's attempts to unhook the Peace Corps from those mossy horns acknowledges that point. Unfortunately his attempt—if adopted—seems likely to impale us even more painfully on the same horns.

I can't take very seriously the proposal to change the name of our candidates from "trainees" to "Volunteers." Even if the name is spelled in capitals, it shouldn't take long for the Volunteer grapevine to identify it for what it is: an attempt to mislead them by pretending that selection is not a reality. As soon as the word spreads that it is "as easy to separate a Volunteer from the Peace Corps as it is to separate a trainee in training," the pretense will fail in its aim of making candidates feel they are being treated like adults. Further, I would expect a wave of revulsion to sweep across those who value honesty.

The other recommendation McClure makes is more substantial but no more constructive: do away with "Selection" and selection boards, but select by consultation between the country director or the desk officer and the project director. In the context of a proposal to reduce tension in training, that one leaves me reeling. If a project director is to answer questions about how people are doing, he will have to know. That means he will have to ask his staff, and that, in turn, means the staff will have to look at the trainees/Volunteers—which seems to be something the Turkey task forces objected to. The only differences I recognize from the present system are that: 1) data are to be collected casually and unobstrusively rather than systematically and openly 2) the country director or his representative is to make selection decisions rather than a Field Selection Officer 3) decisions will no longer be discussed with the training staff and 4) the process of decision-making will no longer be visible and perhaps not even described to the trainees/Volunteers.

I can't conceive of those changes as reassuring to trainees. I remember too vividly the associate rep who wanted the bottom 25 percent of a training group separated because his country staff didn't want any more problems; the project director who wanted all those trouble makers who criticized his unilateral policy-making turned away; the desk officer who said, "We don't want this man. All wrestlers are homosexual."

Almost the only point I can agree with in McClure's proposal is the starting point, that selection arouses anxiety in trainees. I reject flatly the implication that those of us who are responsible for selection are unaware of that issue. My conviction is that our best available strategy for reducing selection anxiety is to be entirely open about both selection and the day-to-day evaluation of trainees. Having worked for the past three years to encourage openness in training, I can't share McClure's view that in some magic way—by changing a name, for instance—one can give trainers the wisdom, courage, sensitivity, and confidence to provide accurate and rapid feedback to trainees. They can learn under good leadership, but a fiat from an absent country rep won't do the trick. Neither, more's the pity, will a directive from a Volunteer task force. What is needed is continued attention and work on the problem, and to this the Office of Selection is already pledged.

Bela O. Baker is the director of the Division of Programs and Operations in the Office of Selection.

LETTERS TO THE VOLUNTEER

THE VOLUNTEER *welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the Peace Corps. Letters are subject to condensation.*

In the beginning . . .

To THE VOLUNTEER:

Jim McCaffery has caused a good deal of consternation among Ethiopia I-V Volunteers with his blunt appraisal (THE VOLUNTEER, March) of our legacy in Ethiopia. I suspect that current Volunteers in other Peace Corps countries could tell similar tales out of school on their predecessors. Although the account of the first generation of Volunteers has certain elements of truth which do need to be voiced, there are several points in the article that could stand explanation by someone who was around at the beginning.

Freddy Supervol and many (but not all) of those Ethiopian I's did fall into the student support bag. It was not, however, seen by the I's as "an extra responsibility"; rather, the Volunteers were fulfilling the traditional role of a *tillik sou* (big man) which Volunteers, as professional teachers in Ethiopia, are considered. True, Volunteers have abused and been abused by this system, but McCaffery's implication that *all* Peace Corps Volunteers from the first generation were a "soft touch" is not correct. A good many Volunteers in a good many Ethiopian towns had constructive and worthwhile projects and jobs done by their students.

No language legend was left by the first generation of Volunteers.

Likewise, only a handful of this generation, like the first, is *really* proficient in Amharic—Jim McCaffery is one. However, the general level of language ability among the second generation is at least one FSI point higher than the first Volunteers. The reason for this is improved language training. Soon the Jim McCafferys will be the rule, not the exception.

McCaffery is correct in saying that conditions are changing in Ethiopia and with the Peace Corps, that it is not enough to be just a foreigner in the bush. One reason for this is that students expect more from Volunteers because their Peace Corps teachers—among the first generation Volunteers—led them to expect more for themselves and their country.

There is no doubt that Volunteers each year are better trained and do better jobs for the Peace Corps and host country. But when the final Volunteers leave Ethiopia and end the role of the Peace Corps in those highlands, the question will not be whether the second generation was better than the first, or that the third or fourth was better than them all. The question will be how Ethiopia views our years of effort in their country. Whether we did bring something of value to Africa, and in turn, whether we learned something from our years overseas.

JOHN COYNE
Former Volunteer and
associate director,
Ethiopia

Washington, D. C.

An essential ingredient

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

As one who has administered several community development projects (and seen many more) and other technical assistance programs, may I say I thought that the article by Lawrence J. O'Brien and the letter by Richard Y. Norrish (February) made a lot of sense.

Many advocates of community development seem to believe in dictating patterns of action in the name of involvement and permissiveness; "You'll do it this way or we'll find a way to get you to do it." Much community development talk is professional jargon. Small wonder that Peace Corps Volunteers are puzzled by what it means.

Mr. O'Brien makes some excellent points. May I add another?

I refer to the necessity of proper nutrition for infants as a *sine qua non* to their ability to function later as normal adults. All of us who have worked in less developed countries have come to know that malnutrition is a factor in causing listlessness, lack of energy, ill health and a host of problems.

The food scientists, however, have added a new factor, namely that malnutrition, especially shortage of protein between weaning and the age of five, causes serious mental retardation which can never be overcome. In other words, people who have suffered protein shortage in their first few years will never have normal intelligence. In fact, their brains are never fully developed.

So malnutrition not only causes kwashiorkor, marasmus and other physical ailments but crippling of brain power, lasting for life. Perhaps, then, protein is the essential ingredient of all development, of leadership training, of community development, etc. Those of us who are so greatly concerned had better begin giving adequate attention to this newly discovered fact of life.

WILLARD JOHNSON
Former Executive Director
American Freedom from
Hunger Foundation

San Diego, Calif.

A new species?

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

As an ex-Peace Corps Volunteer (Malaysia V) now working for the Trust Territory of the Pacific, I find myself working alongside a new species of Volunteer, and I wonder what has happened to the type of Volunteer that served in past years. But rather than comment on the new species, a species that thinks more of "meaningful experiences" than it does of doing a full day's job, let me quote some of the new Volunteers talking about their own roles and performances.

One Volunteer posted to an out island spends plenty of time away from his assignment. Here's what he says: "I'm assigned to Arno, but I spend as little time there as possible."

A second Volunteer talking about his assignment to an admittedly remote island said this: "I don't want to go out there and vegetate for two years! I'm asking for a transfer."

Another Volunteer, apparently surprised to find that his assignment as a teacher of English as a second language meant a full day of teaching, had this to say: "You better tell the new Volunteers that it's a regular nine to five job. I didn't know that before I came. I could have gotten a job like this back in the States."

These comments are typical of Volunteers who frequently arrive late to work, spend more time showing movies than teaching, and often voice their disinterest in their roles as teachers of English as a second language.

Fortunately, not all the Volunteers are of this type—but too many of them

By Larry K. Hanson

are. I had the pleasure of working for one year myself on a remote island, alongside a Volunteer husband and wife team. This couple did their nine to five job with conscientious enthusiasm, and then found time for other work around the island. Perhaps the training and selection personnel should weed out the new species which is rapidly turning the Peace Corps into the Party Corps.

DUNCAN S. CATLING
Majuro, Marshall Islands

For Vietnam program

To THE VOLUNTEER:

I would like to suggest to THE VOLUNTEER, to Washington staff, to present and returned Volunteers, to people considering joining the Peace Corps, and to that group of people who have labeled themselves as truly concerned about man and his suffering, that the Peace Corps initiate a sorely needed program in South Vietnam.

The Peace Corps, with its resources and experience in development, seems to me to be the perfect organization to head such a program. While here in Thailand we meet or read of people in Europe, Australia, New Zealand or America who are engaged in various activities of assistance to the Vietnamese people, I can't help but feel frustrated, wishing to be helpful in a more perfect manner.

The immediate goals of such a program would be to start clearing the cities of the rubble, start rebuilding schools, hospitals, orphanages; getting people to cart away the ruins, people to lay bricks, to help find temporary homes for the homeless children, to build a new country. Much to many people's surprise, the Volunteers willing to perform these menial tasks exist. I am one.

Naturally, a great deal of planning is required, but it is not an insurmountable obstacle. The rule concerning the bodily safety of Volunteers must be forgotten (are we children or responsible adults?). Returned Volunteers, especially those from Southeast Asia, must be recruited to work as planners and staff members. The cities should be our main concern, since these are the places of the most concentrated amounts of suffering. Assistance from groups already working in Vietnam, the International Voluntary Service Inc., for example, must be solicited. A recruiting program must be undertaken with the same rigor as that displayed by the local draft boards in locating and sending men to Vietnam on a non-volunteer, non-humanistic basis.

Difficult? Challenging? Idealistic?

Let's momentarily forget our involvements wherever we are and ask ourselves if the need for such a program doesn't overshadow our immediate tasks. Certainly the Peace Corps programs in the rest of the world cannot be forgotten. Instead they must be supplemented. Let's take our experience and skills to the people of Vietnam.

PAUL KRAUSE
Srisamrong, Sukhothai,
Thailand

Continuous training

To THE VOLUNTEER:

I feel the present three or four-month training program at the beginning of one's service is inadequate in fulfilling the Volunteer's needs for two years.

The training period seems an exhilarating, involving experience to most Volunteers (especially when they find out they weren't deselected), and, at the end of trying to digest the large quantity of presented material as well as possible, they are anxious to get to their country. (Talking about the things one might meet in country and knowing that it could get rough at times seems to make things more challenging and, possibly, more exciting.) Somehow, though, the determination can wear off very rapidly after you arrive.

The present methods seem to work on the principle: "O.K., you have been prepared as well as possible; now go out there and do the best you can, and stop by when you finish and say hello." I think this is inadequate because, after some time spent in country, 1) a lot of what had been taught is forgotten, 2) some of the information given out might not be entirely true, and 3) some of the things I need to know now were not even touched upon in training. The present method also relies too much on the hope that the Volunteer can keep on top of his frustrations and that the reasons for joining the Peace Corps in the first place are the same and ever present in one's mind.

There are probably a number of untapped sources of information in every Peace Corps country, which is where I think the emphasis should be placed. Congress, the Peace Corps staff, the Volunteers, and the host country, I believe, would see an immediate positive result by continuing the "training" process throughout the two-year period. The host country would feel more a part of and respect more its relation with the Peace Corps; the Volunteers would be better informed and better able to work and live in their environment; the Peace Corps staff would have a ready and constant source of materials, requiring little or no extra staff personnel, and Congress would have to spend very little money for all this good will.

ROBERT HARGREAVES
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

Regional projects

To THE VOLUNTEER:

"Rural jobs and skills for generalists" by Michael Furst (March) should be made required reading for all Peace Corps staff members. The need for Peace Corps Volunteers working in agriculture to have developed two or three agricultural skills by the time they arrive at their Peace Corps sites is indispensable. An A.B. generalist can be trained to work satisfactorily in agriculture, but it is too bad that the first year of the Peace Corps overseas experience must be spent preparing oneself for the second year. I definitely feel Peace Corps Washington is not taking full advantage of a Volunteer when it does not train him adequately before sending him overseas.

Here, in Central America, there are many Volunteers working in agricultural extension or related fields. There is no reason why a special group of trainees could not be trained for agricultural extension and respective skills and then be assigned to countries within a geographical area according to their needs and requests. It would be hoped the first part of the training would take place in a U.S. university specializing in tropical agriculture or whatever it may be. This specialization would be followed up by further in-country training after the

trainee has gained reasonable speaking and understanding ability in the language.

This example of Central America could be easily adapted to other world regional areas where many of the basic agricultural problems are similar. Perhaps, if thoroughly investigated, it could also result in a less expensive program than current ones which many times train Volunteers under the broad title of community development. This often does not provide the Volunteer with a specific skill with which to make an entrance into his community.

LE ROY MABERY
Tecoluca, El Salvador

VOLUNTEER philosophy

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

The tone and message of THE VOLUNTEER has changed greatly since I first began to read it as a college freshman. Obviously it has evolved into a more sophisticated, philosophical magazine reflecting these aspects of the Peace Corps itself. But, in the process, I think it has lost some of the interest of the Volunteer in the field and perhaps the general reading public in America.

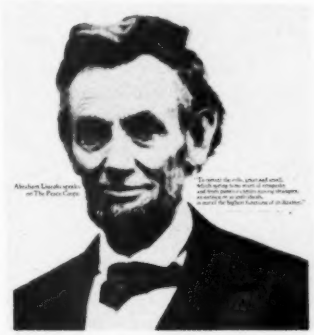
I, for one, find the monthly analytical, philosophical dissections unprofitable after a point, because I think excess intellectualization increases the gulf between thought and action. I believe you can assume a certain level of intelligence and awareness on the part of Peace Corps Volunteers that presupposes they realize the intangible attitude changes their presence may precipitate or encourage.

Would it not be more profitable and interesting to report on the nitty-gritty of what Volunteers are actually doing (or not doing) around the world? Perhaps most important, what are the people like whom they work with? What are their jobs and frustrations? The host country people, when and if they are presented, seem cardboard cutouts; not happy, angry, sad, weeping, laughing, working souls. It is very difficult to elicit any real feeling for other countries and people in the distant way they are now presented. One can only take issue with, not empathize with, the Peace Corps jargon of CD, RD, UCD, ad infinitum. Whereas, in contrast, the tableau of Latin America in the February issue was superb. Could not more pictures be painted with words?

Memorandum

TO : The field
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: Turning phrases

DATE: June, 1968



When Abraham Lincoln spoke out on the Peace Corps recently, some members of his party in Congress sat up and took notice. Three of them reacted unfavorably; it wasn't what Honest Abe said, but what he said it about, that the Congressmen disliked. Mr. Lincoln was the subject of one of the ads in the 1968 Peace Corps advertising campaign. His image appeared next to the words "Abraham Lincoln speaks on the Peace Corps: 'To correct the evils, great and small, which spring from want of sympathy and from positive enmity among strangers, as nations or as individuals, is one of the highest functions of civilization.' (Abraham Lincoln, September 30, 1859)." One of the Congressmen who commented publicly on the ad, Rep. Thomas Meskill (R-Conn.), had this to say, "Many of us have no doubt wondered what Abraham Lincoln thought of the Peace Corps. I would also like to have his views on the TFX scandal, the Great Society generally, Bobby Baker, Billy Sol Estes and Lyndon Johnson. . . . I wish to congratulate Director Vaughn for his enterprise. He has discovered and put to use a remarkable historical technique. From now on, Mr. Speaker, we who serve in public office no longer need to fear that we might miss getting our views recorded on any issue. With the Vaughn historical research technique, our view on events yet to happen can be made known to future generations long after we are dead and gone."

□ □ □

Volunteer Dorothy Platt reports from Korea that, contrary to popular belief, everything is running smoothly in Hung Up (Kang Wan Province).

□ □ □

How's that again? *Mis,* the Turkey newsletter, reports the formation of the Committee of Active Volunteers.

□ □ □

The Peace Corps physicians in Nigeria recently got all caught up in their own phraseology, according to country director John McConnell. The doctors were drafting a recommendation for a change in policy toward Volunteer wives who become pregnant overseas. Concerned about the safety of deliveries in country, the physicians wrote: "It has become apparent that pregnancies are medically advisable only in a very small number of instances and then only with four-wheel transport."

□ □ □

Spring-cleaning the hair shirt: Many Peace Corps veterans have noted that agency issues have a way of repeating themselves. But it was perhaps never better expressed than by the senior staff member who recently said: "Every two years the Peace Corps finds it mandatory to re-invent the wheel."

The Peace Corps is still and will always be a person to person venture despite how technical our support or philosophical our attitude. THE VOLUNTEER should reflect this, not only because the host country people are our reason for being overseas, but also as they are the other half of a people to people encounter.

SHARON CLARKE

Muar, Johore
Malaysia

The 'planning gap'

To THE VOLUNTEER:

As the community development worker gathers public sentiment to form a plan of action, he stops short of making it more useful. He fails to completely fill the "planning gap" that every less developed country faces. The community development worker forms a plan for social benefits that a project could fulfill while all too often leaving out the economic specifics.

The social benefits of a well or a road are all too apparent to the community involved, but a government planning agency is more concerned with economic criteria. In an era when governments are using development plans more and more often, the necessity for statistics and reliable projections increases. The problem up to now has been the scarcity of sufficient personnel with adequate technical ability. Thus many developmental projects are begun with overall considerations being the paramount criteria, forgetting the needed sectorial analysis of specific projects.

This latter point in the planning gap is exactly where a community development worker could play an integral role. Rather than the CD worker always needing a technical backstop, he, in turn, can become one himself. Of course, one will ask how can a CD worker do such a task without previous experience? Every government has a set of criteria by which it spends development funds. These could easily be understood by a CD worker. He could apply them to the particular community to which he is assigned.

International as well as private banks, when making loans, prefer to finance specific projects based on specific facts. A loan for a road might depend on knowing if base gravel and local labor force is available. Information such as this will have far more influence in deciding an investment than a petition with 350 names sent to the mayor.

Another aspect the CD worker can examine is the availability of private funds for development. The government is often unrepresented or underrepresented in rural areas and might not have sufficient information about sources of funds. A cattle owner might invest money in a farm-to-market road if he knew that the government would bear some of the cost. Conversely, the government might undertake a task if it knew that local funds would be forthcoming.

This is not to say that the Peace Corps should supersede government planning agencies. It can, however, expose facts that might not have been known otherwise. It would be up to the government agencies to decide the feasibility of a project, but the job will have been made easier.

Dangers always exist in such a plan: statistics can be exaggerated or ignored, political aspects forgotten or overstated. These are risks, albeit calculated, that should be taken into account, but not ones to discourage any such work being undertaken.

A CD worker often loses objectivity when confronted with the felt needs of a community. Some economic research might restore his perspective. I don't think that being "realistic" should be anathema to Peace Corps lexicon. Even today CD workers do feasibility studies to find out whether a community can sustain a cooperative. Similar rules or variables can equally be followed in the question of a road, well or irrigation canal. The community can work on these projects alone, but their overall feasibility will determine outside aid.

The Peace Corps has economists among its ranks who can aid the CD worker in the gathering of information. The economist draws the diagrams, but we can provide the paper. Too often the Peace Corps Volunteer has merely performed social, diplomatic or good will functions; this would give him the chance to perform economic ones as well.

JOHN FREIVALDS

David, Panama

Who is 'ideal PCV'?

To THE VOLUNTEER:

"The ideal staff member" (March) provides a clear description of those expectations which we should all consider in our functioning as a staff person. Finding such an individual is not the goal, but individually approaching what we see as "the ideal staff member" is a goal we should all direct ourselves towards.

Is there any thought being given to a similar article, but on "The ideal Volunteer"?

JOHN G. ANDERSON
Regional deputy director

Bhopal, India

Editor's note: Staff members are invited to write and tell us what qualities make up "the ideal Volunteer" so that we may construct a composite.

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